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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9127  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 2565  
RUCNTXD/AMEMBASSY MAJURO PRIORITY 0059  
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 3822  
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA PRIORITY 0166  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5085  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1883  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4632  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2028  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2690  
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0834  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001046

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/ANP, DRL, DRL/AWH  
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/28/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: PAPUA -- NO EVIDENCE OF MILITARY ATTACK ON  
CIVILIANS

REF: JAKARTA 957

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Overseas NGOs have alleged that there was recently a major incident pitting the Indonesian military against civilians in the Papuan highlands. Human rights groups in Papua have found no evidence of any attack. The bubbling up of such allegations--which is a regular occurrence--highlights the importance of greater access by the GOI to Papua for diplomats, journalists and NGOs. Mission is looking into a report that the GOI may be loosening some of these restrictions. END SUMMARY.

A SENSATIONAL REPORT...

12. (U) The UK-based Free West Papua Campaign and other Papua activist groups have circulated reports alleging a major Indonesian Military (TNI) attack on Papuan civilians. The report, sourced to the heretofore unknown SPM News agency, claimed that 350 soldiers from the TNI Battalion 756 had killed seven Papuans in Kimbin village, near the central highland town of Wamena on May 23.

13. (U) The SPM story also claimed that soldiers had burned houses and churches, killed livestock and destroyed crops in the area. As a result, according to the report, hundreds of residents had fled into the jungle. The report went on to assert that an SPM News crew on the scene had obtained first-hand information about the attack.

...BUT NO EVIDENCE

14. (SBU) Human rights activists from the Catholic Diocese of Jayapura's Office for Justice and Peace (SKP) have dismissed the report as untrue. (Note: Based on past performance, SKP--as an organization--is not shy about criticizing the GOI if it thinks there is any evidence of human rights violations.) SKP officials who have visited Kimbin and the surrounding area in the past week report no evidence of any

attack. SKP officials also said there was no evidence of military operations in the area around Wamena. (Note: Poloff visited Wamena on May 6 and saw no evidence of military activity in the region. See Reftel.)

#### PUTTING THE ACCENT ON ACCESS

15. (C) The situation highlights the gap between overseas Papua activists--many of whom support Papuan independence--and activists within Papua. SKP Director Budi Hernawan told poloff that overseas groups often repeated reports that were patently dubious in order to generate international support for Papuan independence. In any case, reports of human rights incidents in Papua keep cropping up; most of them baseless.

16. (C) To help improve the information flow, it is also important that the GOI enhance access to Papua for diplomats, journalists and NGOs. The GOI has made some progress on this front. Mission officers and other Jakarta-based diplomats have experienced no major problems securing GOI permission for recent Papua trips, and several senior United Nations human rights officials have visited the province to investigate torture and the situation for human rights defenders. That said, the requirement for GOI permission--and the whole tiresome process of obtaining it--constitutes a significant barrier in and of itself. Mission has regularly pressed the GOI to provide more access.

17. (C) (Note: There may be some movement on this issue, as we learned in a May 29 meeting with Trini Gunarti, Deputy Director for North American Affairs at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU). Gunarti told Pol/C and poloff that

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DEPLU no longer required that diplomats obtain permission to travel to Papua, only that they inform DEPLU of their plans to do so. She added that diplomats did not need written permission for travel to Papua. We will try to confirm Gunarti's comments with others in the GOI. End note.)

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